



# Career Path Program Evaluation for the Retention of Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Ltd. Scholars

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**Abstract**— A shortage of maritime officers emphasizes the need for effective retention strategies to address the growing demand for skilled seafarers in the rapidly expanding global maritime industry. This study evaluates the Career Path Program of Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Ltd. ("K" Line) aimed at retaining Filipino maritime scholars, focusing on satisfaction in terms of salary, rewards and benefits, job satisfaction, professional growth, and welfare through a convergent mixed-methods parallel research design. The quantitative study accounted for 107 "K" Line scholars, while the qualitative study accounted for 11 "K" Line scholars. Findings indicate that the Career Path Program effectively enhances scholar retention through well-structured support in professional development and welfare. While satisfaction levels with salary and professional growth opportunities were generally positive, the analysis suggests that enhanced rewards and promotion opportunities could further improve retention rates. This study offers valuable and actionable insights for shipping companies to review their career path programs to enhance retention, increase loyalty, and significantly reduce turnover among seafarers.



**Keywords**— Retention, Salary, Job satisfaction, Rewards and Benefits, Professional Growth, Welfare

## I. INTRODUCTION

There were an estimated 1,892,720 seafarers globally, comprising 857,540 officers and 1,035,180 ratings, according to the Seafarer Workforce Report released by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the Baltic International Maritime Council (BIMCO) in 2021. In addition to China, Indonesia, Russia, and India, the Philippines is one of the top five providers of seafarers. This highlights the role of Filipino seafarers in the global maritime industry, known for their skills and experience. However, the report also raised concerns about the sufficiency of the current supply to meet the demand, particularly projecting a shortage of 89,510 officers by 2026, thereby presenting a significant challenge for the industry.

Global trade by sea is rapidly increasing alongside the global economy, resulting in a rise in maritime activities, as reported in the Shipping Now 2022-2023 data edition.

This upsurge has led to a growing demand for qualified seafarers to operate vessels safely and efficiently. Seafarers are contractual workers stated in MLC2006, Regulation Standard A2.5.2 (b), and typically serve on board for less than 12 months. Any service period beyond this duration is considered non-compliant as per MLC Standard A5.2.1.6. In such cases, ships are not allowed to sail until these non-conformities are addressed (AMSA, 2022). After disembarking, seafarers have the right to seek new employment opportunities. This right is anchored in the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948. This situation often puts the former employer in the position of finding a suitable replacement.

Retaining these seafarers and ensuring their loyalty are significant challenges for shipping companies. According to Collins (2022), about 25% of employees are considering leaving their current company. Additionally, several

shipping sectors experience an annual turnover rate ranging from 25% to 35% (Bhattacharya, 2015). Therefore, it is important to understand why seafarers choose to stay and progress in their careers. To effectively address human resource challenges, ship owners are looking for ways to improve their pool of seafarers, especially officers, as the cost associated with replacing them significantly exceeds the cost of retention. This includes expenses related to recruitment, training, and the loss of valuable knowledge and experience (Cloutier et al., 2015). Decision-making for safe operations on board the vessel can be acquired through years of professional training and seafaring experiences (Hannaford & Hassel, 2021).

The absence of a well-defined career path is identified as one of the key factors contributing to employee turnover. Additionally, issues such as lack of training, failure to customize recognition, neglect to listen to employee concerns, and not monitoring retention rates are areas that need attention. Without a clear career progression, employees may lack the motivation to remain in their roles. It is essential to demonstrate how employees can progress within the company to cultivate loyalty and dedication (Half R., 2018). Recognizing this, several organizations in the maritime industry have already created career path programs, providing opportunities for professional development and growth for their seafarers.

Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd, commonly known as “K” Line, is a shipping firm that offers various marine transportation services, such as dry bulk, container shipping, pure car carrier, and energy resources. “K” Line employs seafarers from Japan, the Philippines, China, India, Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria, and other nationalities, with Filipinos accounting for more than half of the total seafarers employed. Over the years, “K” Line has consistently supported the development of Filipino individuals in the maritime sector by providing scholarships to those who aspire to become officers through their specialized career path program, which includes a clear route for progressing in one's career. Implementing the career path program faced challenges, reflecting the broader industry-wide difficulties of retaining seafarers. A common challenge “K” Line Scholars face is the mismatch between their career aspirations and the advancement prospects offered by the company. Scholars often perceive these opportunities as limited, resulting in slower professional growth than anticipated. Compounding this issue, more attractive offers from other companies lure scholars away with promises of higher salaries, better career progression, enhanced welfare both ashore and onboard, greater rewards and benefits, and higher job satisfaction. This situation presents a

significant challenge for “K” Line in retaining talent and necessitates strategic adjustments to meet the evolving expectations of their scholars.

In relation to this, identifying the factors affecting the retention of “K” Line scholars is important. Especially given the global shipping industry's increasing demand for qualified seafarers and the need for safe and efficient vessel operations (Mahmud, 2021). This understanding led the researcher to evaluate the “K” Line Career Path Program by analyzing the satisfaction levels of their scholars in terms of salary, rewards and benefits, job satisfaction, professional growth, and welfare. The primary goal of this study is to enhance “K” Line Scholar retention by providing recommendations that could improve their career path program. The findings are intended to help shipping companies boost seafarer satisfaction, thereby improving retention rates.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Seafarer Retention in the Shipping Industry

The shipping industry relies heavily on the skills and expertise of seafarers, who play a crucial role in ensuring the safe and efficient movement of goods around the world. Over the past few years, a significant amount of research has been carried out to develop approaches aimed at keeping seafarers (Caesar et al., 2015; Papachristou et al., 2015). The overall outcome of this research emphasizes the significance of job satisfaction and motivation in retaining seafarers. However, there is a lack of discussion about the career path program.

Seafarer retention is an important aspect of the success of shipping companies (Arsenie et. al., 2014), and it is important for the growth and revenue of an organization (Cloutier, O., 2015). Satisfied employees ultimately benefit the organization in terms of cost savings, as turnover can lead to a loss of valuable knowledge and experience as well as increased recruitment and training costs (Hidayah and Harnoto, 2018). Employee retention can be understood as the range of strategies and initiatives organizations implement to encourage employees to stay with the company for an extended period. While there are different interpretations of the term, the underlying objective is to retain talented individuals within the organization and prevent them from seeking opportunities elsewhere (James & Mathew, 2012 as cited in Singh, 2019). In recent years, the shipping industry has faced a growing shortage of skilled seafarers, making it even more important for companies to focus on retaining their employees (Nguyen et al., 2014).

### **Salary, Rewards and Benefits, Job Satisfaction, Professional Growth, and Welfare**

Employees may leave the organization for personal or professional reasons. Employees do not leave the company for insignificant reasons. Several factors can influence employee retention, which includes salary (Nguyen et al., 2014), rewards and benefits (Acharya, 2022), job satisfaction (Jalagat, 2016), professional growth (Tymon et al., 2011 as cited in Sumbal, 2018), and welfare (Acharya, 2022).

#### **Salary**

Salary is a fundamental factor in employee retention. Employees who perceive they are being paid fairly and equitably are likelier to remain with their current employers. Research has consistently demonstrated that compensation is one of the most important factors employees consider when evaluating job offers and deciding whether to stay with their current employer. Thus, low salary is one of the reasons employees leave an organization (Shakeel, N. and Sahar, 2015). However, according to Angott (2007, as cited in Tsai & Liou, 2017), an employee's current salary is a significant consideration for most job seekers, but it likely will not be enough to keep them in the company.

#### **Rewards, Benefits, and Welfare**

Katsikea et al. (2015) state that rewards and benefits are important to employee retention, development, and satisfaction. The authors suggest that rewards and benefits should be viewed as strategic tools that can positively impact employee behavior, motivation, and overall performance. They also point out that an organization's rewards and benefits system should be aligned with its overall strategy, values, and goals. When employees feel they are being fairly rewarded for their work, they are more likely to be satisfied and motivated to stay with the organization. This, in turn, can positively impact employee retention, which can be important for maintaining a skilled and experienced workforce. Moreover, employees who are satisfied with their compensation are more likely to engage in professional development and improve their performance, which can lead to better organizational outcomes.

Rewards can be classified as extrinsic and intrinsic (Silvera, 2013). Extrinsic rewards are tangible benefits external to the employee's job or task (Munir et al., 2016). This means the employer typically provides them and is not directly related to the work. Examples of extrinsic rewards include salary, bonuses, promotions, training and development opportunities, and welfare benefits on board ships (Thai et al., 2013). These rewards can effectively

motivate employees to perform well and help attract and retain talent within an organization.

On the other hand, intrinsic rewards are intangible or psychological benefits that an employee receives from their work. These rewards are related to the work itself and are often associated with the satisfaction, fulfillment, and enjoyment an employee gets from performing well in their role. Examples of intrinsic rewards include appreciation, facing new challenges, positive and caring attitudes from employers, and job rotation after achieving a goal (Safiullah, 2014). These types of rewards can be very powerful motivators for employees as they tap into the individual's personal values and motivations.

#### **Job Satisfaction**

The authors Khalib et al. (2015) have provided a definition of job satisfaction as a measure of an employee's level of liking or disliking of their job. Job satisfaction is a subjective feeling or attitude toward one's work, reflecting the level of pleasure or fulfillment an individual experiences from their job or the work environment (Ali, 2016). It is a complex and multi-dimensional construct that can be influenced by various factors such as job characteristics, work relationships, pay, opportunities for growth and development, work-life balance, and organizational culture. Job satisfaction can significantly impact an employee's motivation, performance, and overall well-being, and can ultimately affect an organization's productivity and success. Charles et al. (2019) suggest that job satisfaction, which includes factors such as salary, promotion opportunities, and receiving awards or recognition, is negatively related to an employee's intention to quit their job. In other words, employees who are satisfied with their jobs are less likely to have the desire to leave their current employment (Arfat and Rainyee, 2014). The authors argue that job satisfaction is important when addressing employee retention and turnover, as it can significantly impact an organization's ability to retain talented and productive employees.

Moreover, Caesar et al. (2015); Papachristou et al. (2015) studies conclude that job satisfaction is important in retaining seafarers.

#### **Professional Growth and Welfare**

Professional growth is another factor that has been identified as important for seafarer loyalty and retention. Career advancement opportunities such as training programs, leadership courses, and mentorship have been shown to positively impact seafarers job satisfaction and retention (Li et al., 2014).

Welfare and support programs such as counseling services, medical care, and family support programs have also been

shown to improve seafarer well-being and job satisfaction. It is an essential aspect of employee retention. Employees who are supported in their well-being and work-life balance are more likely to be satisfied with their job and remain with the organization long-term. By prioritizing employee welfare, organizations can encourage commitment among their employees (Rafiei et., al 2014).

### Career Path Programs for Seafarers

Career path programs are important tools for enhancing employee retention across various industries (Arsenie et al., 2014; Yamamoto, 2014). By offering well-defined career development paths, these programs enable employees to acquire new skills, develop their abilities, and gain essential knowledge to advance in their careers (Chandani et al., 2014).

Seafarers can benefit greatly from career path programs, as they provide a clear sense of direction and purpose and lead to increased job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment to the employer (Tsai & Liou, 2017). Recognizing this, some ship owners and manning agencies have taken proactive measures to implement such programs. An example is the introduction of a career path program that allows seafarers to ascend to higher positions on board, such as Captains, within a relatively short span of (8) eight years after completing their degree (Galani, 2022).

"K" Line has established a Career Path Program for Filipinos who aspire to become maritime officers. The program selects candidates from institutions such as the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy, Maritime of Asia and the Pacific, John B. Lacson, University of Cebu, Lyceum of Batangas, and Crystal-E College in Bohol. The selection process consists of examinations, interviews, and medical examinations that begin either during high school or college. In addition, it also includes the selection of Mechanical Engineer board passers to bridge to become Marine Engineer. The program is founded on awarding scholarships to aspiring seafarers. These scholarships serve as educational grants, providing opportunities for individuals who may need more resources to pursue maritime education. Besides the scholarships, the program supports comprehensive training covering MARINA requirements and "K" Line in-house training, ensuring seafarers are well-equipped with practical expertise, a profound understanding of real-life maritime situations, and theoretical knowledge. "K" Line career path program also offers a clear route for progressing in one's career. Scholars need to understand their career path, identify the significant achievements they need to attain, and comprehend the several phases of their professional growth. This component can serve as a powerful source of

motivation for these scholars, as it converts their ambitions into concrete objectives and provides guidance to achieve their goals.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a convergent parallel design, a mixed methods design. The quantitative component involved the collection and analysis of numerical data through survey questionnaires. On the other hand, the qualitative component aimed to gain insight into experiences, perceptions, and feedback through interviews. After that, the methods were triangulated by directly comparing the quantitative statistical results and qualitative findings (Creswell, J.W., & Creswell, J.D. (2018). Two datasets were obtained, analyzed separately, and compared in the research process. The study included independent variables such as salary, rewards and benefits, job satisfaction, professional growth, and welfare, and the dependent variable for this study was retention. For the survey, a total of 107 "K" Line scholars responded to the survey. 11 "K" Line scholars participated in the interviews. The respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on various factors used in the survey on a four-point Likert response format, 4 being strongly satisfied and 1 being not strongly dissatisfied. Semi-structured interview questionnaires were used for the interview.

## IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Salary

SALARY	Mean	VI
Current Salary Level	2.91	Satisfied
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

Regarding salary, the respondents' overall satisfaction level had a mean of 2.91, suggesting a generally satisfied perception among the respondents (Table 1). This result suggests that the surveyed seafarers are content with the remuneration provided by the "K" Line. Satisfaction with the current salary level is an essential aspect of employee retention, particularly in a field as specialized and demanding as seafaring. As stated by Participant A, "Salary does not really affect my decision to stay at "K" Line as I am actually contented with my present salary. A commendable profile of the company, supporting crews,



good company benefits, and welfare are some of main reasons why I chose to stay here,” expresses contentment with their present salary and emphasizes that salary competitiveness is not the primary factor influencing their decision to stay. Participant K expressed, “Salary motivates the crew. If the salary is good, the crew feels appreciated and gives back to the company their money's worth.” An organization's ability to attract and retain quality employees is greatly influenced by its ability to offer a competitive salary compared to that of others. Therefore, these factors are intrinsically connected to employee retention (Iqbal et al., 2017). According to Manalo et al., (2013), the high salary of seafarers is one of the reasons why Filipinos would like to work onboard the vessel. A satisfied perception regarding salary can contribute to the overall contentment of seafarers, potentially enhancing their commitment to the “K” Line.

*Table 2 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Rewards and Benefits*

REWARDS AND BENEFITS	Mean	VI
Health insurance benefits	3.09	<i>Satisfied</i>
Family health insurance	3.03	<i>Satisfied</i>
Standby pay	2.75	<i>Satisfied</i>
Seniority bonus	2.72	<i>Satisfied</i>
Rejoining bonus	2.66	<i>Satisfied</i>
Recognizing employee achievements	2.54	<i>Satisfied</i>
Rewarding employee achievements	2.41	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>
Retirement benefits	2.32	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>
Loyalty bonus	2.10	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

Among the indicators pertaining to the respondent's level of satisfaction with “K” Line's Career Path Program, particularly in terms of rewards and benefits, health insurance benefits and family health insurance emerge with the highest mean values of 3.09 and 3.03, respectively, both falling within the “Satisfied” category (Table 2). These findings indicate a general content perception among seafarers regarding the health-related benefits provided by the program. Conversely, the loyalty

bonus records the lowest mean value of 2.10, categorized as “Somewhat Satisfied”. As stated by Participant B, “Extra income given by the company for me greatly helps during financial struggles during vacation.” This suggests that respondents may have varying perceptions of loyalty bonuses, and feedback from scholars could enhance their value. This type of bonus should be reviewed by the company and given across all ranks since Chusna and Kusuma (2022) found that the loyalty bonus significantly impacts retention, emphasizing the importance of these financial incentives in enhancing employee commitment. Similarly, rewarding employee achievements and retirement benefits are rated as “Somewhat Satisfied,” with mean values of 2.41 and 2.32, respectively. One of the scholars interviewed expressed the view that providing retirement benefits to loyal crew members who have served the company for an extended period is a positive practice. Participant C believed that this approach could incentivize more crew members to remain with the company for longer durations, stating, “I think it is a good idea to provide retirement benefits to the loyal crew who have served the company for many years. By doing so, we can encourage more crew members to stay longer with the company.” The moderate satisfaction levels point to potential gaps in how these rewarding employee achievement and retirement benefits meet the scholars' expectations, suggesting room for improvement in the company's retention strategies. Participant K highlights specific bonuses such as health benefits, stand-by pay, leave pay, and rejoining bonus as crucial for acknowledging true loyalty, stating, “True loyalty must sometimes be noticed by this company and not just taken for granted. A change in decision is possible if the health benefits, stand-by pay, leave pay, and rejoining bonus will be removed.” They express concern that removing these benefits might influence their decision to stay with the company. The study by Quinby (2020) found that retirement benefits significantly impacted employee retention, underscoring the importance of these benefits in retaining employees. Similarly, research by Wickramasinghe and Sajeevani (2018) demonstrated that rewarding employee achievement significantly positively influences retention intentions, highlighting the effectiveness of incentive programs in maintaining a committed workforce. The weighted mean for rewards and benefits is 2.62, placing it within the “Satisfied” range. This signifies an overall positive perception regarding the rewards and benefits aspect of the Career Path Program of “K” Line. However, the variations in mean values highlight specific areas, such as loyalty bonuses, rewarding employee achievements, and retirement benefits, where targeted enhancements might further

elevate the satisfaction levels of “K” Line's future scholars. Rewards and benefits play a significant role in enhancing employee commitment to a company (Nazir et al., 2013). However, if these rewards and benefits are not administered properly, it may negatively affect employee morale, leading to unproductive performance and a high staff turnover rate (Nigusea & Getachew, 2019).

*Table 3 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Job Satisfaction*

JOB SATISFACTION	Mean	VI
Culture of teamwork onboard	3.21	<i>Satisfied</i>
Work onboard	3.16	<i>Satisfied</i>
Manpower onboard to perform job effectively	3.16	<i>Satisfied</i>
Reporting mistakes or errors without fear of reprisal.	2.99	<i>Satisfied</i>
Support provided to manage stress and fatigue onboard	2.81	<i>Satisfied</i>
Waiting time of less than 2 months to go onboard (re-employment)	2.53	<i>Satisfied</i>
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

The survey findings pertaining to job satisfaction within “K” Line's Career Path Program indicate a predominantly favorable disposition among the respondents. Based on Table 3, the indicator with the highest mean value is the “Culture of teamwork onboard” at 3.21, categorizing it as “Satisfied.” This could mean seafarers feel a strong sense of working together and being part of a team, contributing positively to their job satisfaction. In terms of the lowest mean value, “Waiting time of less than 2 months to go onboard (re-employment)” stands at 2.53, classified as “Satisfied.” While still within the satisfaction range, this indicator suggests that improvements in reducing the waiting time for re-employment could enhance the overall job satisfaction of the seafarers. Participant D specifies that long waiting periods without just reasons and dealing with terror superiors are potential factors that could negatively impact their job satisfaction, stating, “All except for long waiting period without just reasons. Terror superiors”. For these individuals, financial obligations and commitments, such as buying a house or paying debts, are linked to job stability and consistent earnings (Acharya, 2022). A long time of waiting until their savings drain out would mean seeking employment elsewhere. The weighted mean for job satisfaction is 2.98, placing it within the “Satisfied” range. This underscores the positive job-related experiences of the scholars. High levels of job

dissatisfaction and low levels of commitment to an organization significantly impact the increased turnover rates of seafarers. As a result, increasing seafarers' job satisfaction can significantly lower the rate at which they leave the company (Turker & Er, 2007, cited by Cahoon et al., 2014).

*Table 4 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Professional Growth*

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH	Mean	VI
Training and development opportunities	3.17	<i>Satisfied</i>
Provides opportunities for promotion	2.79	<i>Satisfied</i>
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

As for the respondents' level of satisfaction in terms of professional growth within “K” Line's Career Path Program, a positive sentiment among the respondents has emerged. Improving employee performance entails using various measures, including providing employees with work training to enhance their skills and cultivate motivation and retention (Haryono et al., 2020). “K” Line has an advantage in utilizing the advanced and modern equipment of “K” Line Maritime Academy Philippines as they provide in-house education and training to all seafarers, including scholars. The indicator with the highest mean value is “Training and development opportunities,” standing at 3.17 and categorized as “Satisfied” (Table 4). This signifies a strong acknowledgment from the seafarers regarding the program's efficacy in providing avenues for continuous learning and skill development. Participant E appreciates the training and development opportunities provided by KLMA (“K” Line Maritime Academy), renowned for its globally competitive programs. They emphasize the importance of these opportunities in skill development and competitiveness as seafarers, stating, “Training and development opportunities. K-line is known for its highest quality and globally competitive trainings offered to its crew through KLMA, which is very helpful in developing our skills to be an effective and competitive seafarer.” Conversely, “Provides opportunities for promotion” records a mean value of 2.79, also falling within the “Satisfied” range. While reflecting contentment, this suggests that there might be room for improvement in the perception of promotional opportunities within the Career Path Program. Participant F highlights the importance of training and development opportunities, alongside career advancement, expressing, “Training and development opportunities, career advancement. Promotions will make

me stay in the company. If I really deserved the promotion and I was not promoted, then I will transfer to another company who is willing to promote and give opportunity to me". They emphasize that promotions would significantly influence their decision to remain with the company. Additionally, they indicate that despite meeting the criteria for promotion, not being promoted could lead to turnover, as they seek opportunities elsewhere. Prince (2005) as cited in Das and Baruah (2013), notes that employees always seek opportunities to develop their careers and move up the ladder. If these expectations are not met, it can lead to employee turnover (Hassan et al., 2013). The overall mean for professional growth is 2.98 (Satisfied), indicating an overall satisfaction with the program's provisions for professional growth. Nonetheless, this presents an opportunity to refine particular aspects of the Career Path Program related to professional growth, ensuring that it aligns closely with the aspirations and expectations of "K" Line's seafaring workforce.

Table 5 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Welfare

WELFARE	Mean	VI
Safety policies and procedures being implemented onboard	3.47	<i>Satisfied</i>
Living conditions onboard	3.28	<i>Satisfied</i>
Welfare programs such as medical and emergency assistance for the immediate family	3.12	<i>Satisfied</i>
Support to maintain physical and mental well-being onboard	2.99	<i>Satisfied</i>
Communication channel for addressing seafarers' concerns about their welfare	2.90	<i>Satisfied</i>
Support to maintain physical and mental well-being ashore	2.74	<i>Satisfied</i>
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

As presented in Table 5, the survey results examining welfare aspects within "K" Line's Career Path Program reveal a notably positive outlook among the respondents. The highest mean value is attributed to "Safety policies and procedures being implemented onboard," with a mean of 3.47, categorized as "Satisfied." This indicates a strong perception from seafarers regarding the safety measures in place, emphasizing the importance of a secure working environment. On the other end, the indicator with the lowest mean value is "Support to maintain physical and mental well-being ashore," standing at 2.74 but still within the "Satisfied" range. Participant I echo this sentiment, expressing that the quality and availability of internet connection can potentially influence their decision to transfer to another company if not satisfactory. They expressed, "Physical and mental well-being onboard. If the vessel has low internet connection or not having internet,

this could potentially make me transfer to another company." This points to potential opportunities for enhancing the support mechanisms for seafarers when they are ashore. The "Living conditions onboard" indicator garnered a mean value of 3.28 (Satisfied). This indicates a high level of satisfaction among seafarers regarding the quality of accommodations and amenities provided during their time at sea. This positive perception is vital, as comfortable living conditions contribute significantly to the overall well-being and job satisfaction of seafaring professionals. Additionally, "Welfare programs such as medical and emergency assistance for the immediate family" achieved a mean value of 3.12, reinforcing the positive impact of the Career Path Program in supporting seafarers and their families during medical emergencies. Participant J echoes similar sentiments, "While we are onboard, they take care of their employees and provide assistance to our family in times of calamity. The company provides unlimited connections unlike other companies, which limit internet access for the crew." This underscores the importance of welfare initiatives that extend beyond the individual seafarer to encompass their immediate family members. The overall mean for welfare is 3.08, which is within the "Satisfied" range. This reflects a positive overall perception of the Career Path Program's provisions for the well-being of the scholars. The specific findings from individual indicators offer valuable cues for targeted improvements, providing a foundation for refining and tailoring welfare-related elements within the program. Welfare helps to improve employee satisfaction, which ultimately reduces the likelihood of employees leaving the company (Pelago, 2024).

Table 6 - Summary Table

RETENTION FACTORS	MEAN	VI
Salary	2.91	<i>Satisfied</i>
Rewards and Benefits	2.62	<i>Satisfied</i>
Job Satisfaction	2.98	<i>Satisfied</i>
Professional Growth	2.98	<i>Satisfied</i>
Welfare	3.08	<i>Satisfied</i>
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>2.87</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Overall, welfare received the highest satisfaction ratings. Regarding salary, the respondents were generally content, indicating satisfaction with the remuneration provided by "K" Line. Among the indicators related to rewards and

benefits, health insurance benefits and family health insurance received the highest satisfaction ratings, while rewarding employee achievements, retirement benefits, and loyalty bonuses received the lowest ratings. The respondents categorized their satisfaction with these aspects as "Somewhat Satisfied". Regarding job satisfaction, respondents reported predominantly favorable perceptions, with a strong sense of teamwork onboard contributing positively. However, there was a suggestion that reducing waiting time for re-employment could further enhance job satisfaction. In terms of professional growth, respondents acknowledged the efficacy of the Career Path Program in providing training and development opportunities, although perceptions regarding promotional opportunities suggested room for improvement. The survey results concerning welfare aspects revealed positive outlooks, particularly regarding safety policies and procedures implemented onboard. However, opportunities were identified to enhance support mechanisms for seafarers ashore and refine welfare programs such as medical and emergency assistance for immediate family members.

## V. CONCLUSION

There is a positive level of satisfaction with "K" Line's welfare, salaries, and professional growth opportunities, with onboard safety policies and health insurance benefits receiving particularly favorable feedback. However, areas such as rewards, retirement benefits, and loyalty bonuses show lower levels of satisfaction and need further enhancement. Effective teamwork has positively impacted job satisfaction, but there is room for improvement in reducing re-employment waiting times and enhancing promotional opportunities. Additionally, while the safety policies and welfare initiatives, including support for seafarers on shore and their families, are generally well-received, further refinement of these systems is necessary to improve overall satisfaction. Areas requiring attention include enhancing health benefits, standby pay, seniority, and rejoining bonuses, recognition of employee achievements, support for managing stress and fatigue, and the quality of living conditions onboard. Strengthening communication channels for addressing seafarers' welfare concerns and maintaining physical and mental well-being both onboard and ashore are also critical. The retention of "K" Line scholars is influenced by a variety of factors that shape their decisions to stay with the company. Salary competitiveness plays a significant role, with diverse opinions on adequacy, though loyalty and prospects for growth often take precedence. Health insurance, retirement benefits, and bonuses are essential to providing financial security and acknowledging loyalty. Job satisfaction

correlates strongly with teamwork, relationships, and the overall company culture, although challenges like long waiting periods for re-employment and difficult superiors can detract from this. The company values professional growth and offers training and career advancement opportunities, but there are concerns about delays in promotions. Additionally, welfare measures, especially those enhancing physical and mental well-being onboard, like unlimited internet access and family support given by the company, contribute significantly to the overall satisfaction and retention of scholars.

The study's findings provide a valuable framework for "K" Line and other shipping companies to improve their retention strategies through the Career Path Program. The demand for skilled seafarers in the worldwide shipping business has significantly increased. Therefore, retaining a dedicated, proficient, and motivated workforce is essential to ensuring maritime operations' safety, efficiency, and sustainability.

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